

OUR IDEAL.

Have we not all, "mid life's petty strife,
Some pure ideal of a noble life
That once seemed possible? Did we not hear
The flutter of its wings, and feel it near,
And just within our reach? It was, And yet
We lost it in this daily jar and fret.
But still our place is kept and it will wait
Ready for us to fill it, soon or late.
No star is ever lost we once have seen;
We always may be what we might have been.

—Adelaide A. Proctor.

A RACE FOR LIFE.

Among the many thrilling adventures of the early Rocky mountain traders there is none more interesting than that of Colter's race for life with over 400 armed and bloodthirsty Blackfoot Indians, one of the most cruel of the western tribes. Colter had accompanied Lewis and Clark in their expedition to the upper waters of the Missouri, but forming a partnership with a man named Potts the two obtained permission from Lewis to stop for the purpose of trapping and hunting. Lewis at the same time recommended them to exercise the greatest prudence and cunning in regard to the Indians, whom he had learned to his cost to be as treacherous and as savage as panthers.

The plan pursued by the partners was to set their traps late in the evening, visit them at early dawn and, after removing them and the game, lie hidden all day. This course succeeded splendidly for some time, and the men grew a little careless in removing all trace of their presence. One morning while rowing up the river in their canoe they heard a heavy tramping as of many feet. Colter declared it to be Indians, and was for abandoning the canoe and taking to the woods, but Potts, who was the older man, laughed at him and pronounced the feet those of buffaloes. The question was soon settled by them sending themselves by a few strokes of the oars right into the midst of several hundred Indians that lined the shore.

Colter, seeing in a moment that escape was impossible, obeyed them when they called him to come ashore and rowed close to the bank. He and Potts were just stepping up, when an Indian snatched Potts' rifle. Colter, a powerful man, wrested the weapon away from the savage at once and returned it to Potts, who seemed to lose himself completely. He threw himself back into the canoe and pushed it out into the stream. Colter, who hoped to release them from their position by strategy, called to him to come back, but the panic stricken man kept out in the current, and presently cried to Colter, "Oh, I am wounded!" Colter turned just in time to see the Indian that had shot Potts lowering his bow from his aim, and while he looked he saw the Indian drop dead and heard the report of Potts' rifle.

A second after Potts' lifeless body fell back in the canoe, pierced by a hundred arrows. Colter was now in for it. The Indians stripped him of his clothes and held a consultation as to what was to be done with him. Colter, who knew their language slightly, gathered that some of his amiable captors proposed to whip him to death, some to skin him alive, while others wanted to burn him at the stake, but the chief, a burly old chap, with some originality decided the question by declaring that if he was not too swift a runner that he should have a chance for his life. If he could get away he might, but if he was recaptured they would burn him alive.

The chief approached the prisoner and asked if he was a good runner. Colter replied that he was a very poor one, while in reality he knew himself to be one of the swiftest foot racers on the border. His answer was hailed with delight by the Indians, who were promising themselves great diversion with the white man. The 600 Indians were stationed at one point and Colter given a start of 200 hundred yards, that the sport might not be too quickly ended. With a whoop from the Indians the race began.

Like an arrow from the bow the prisoner shot forward, and the duped Blackfeet saw that it would put them to all they knew to overtake their human prey, or even to approach him near enough to shoot him. They had one great advantage over the white man, however, and they counted largely on this to give them the victory. Their feet were protected by moccasins, while those of the trapper were naked and exposed to the sandbars and cacti, with which the plain was thickly set. These pierced Colter's feet terribly, but he could not pause for such trifles. He had run three of the six miles that lay between him and the Jefferson fork of the Missouri, for which he had made before he dared to look back. When he did he saw that he had, with one exception, left all his pursuers far behind. One warrior alone still held out, and with his spear held aloft came on with the speed of a greyhound.

He was within a hundred yards of the white man when Colter, resolved to save himself if it lay in human power, put forth a tremendous effort and tore on with all his speed. The blood burst from his nose and a slight hemorrhage also filled his mouth, but he pushed on, frantic at the idea of being retaken after his superhuman efforts. He had nearly reached the river when he looked back once more, and to his dismay he saw that his pursuer was not thirty feet behind him and was just in the act of hurling his spear. With incredible celerity he whirled about, and before the savage could check his rapid course ran right into the Indian's arms.

Colter's unexpected action and his bloody appearance so startled the Blackfeet that he stumbled, and the lance, thrown ten feet, stuck in the ground and broke off. While the redskin tried to recover his equilibrium, Colter picked up the piece of spear that retained the head and drove it through the body of the Indian, pinning him to the ground a dead man. But fearing that the rest of the band would presently appear, the trapper stopped only long enough to secure the dead man's weapons and then

ran on, reaching the river more dead himself than alive.

After a rest of a minute or two he plunged into the stream and swam a short distance to a drift of trash and limbs of trees and brush. This drift had lodged against the shore of a small sand bank and Colter dived beneath it, coming up with his head among the thickest leaved branches. In a few minutes the Indians reached the dead body of the warrior, whom Colter now knew to have been a chief by the wailing of the band over his corpse. When this expression of grief was over, Colter heard their yells for vengeance, and, knowing that if captured that a death by the most horrible torture awaited him, he solved to drown himself rather than fall into their hands. They ran to the banks of the stream and, suspecting his hiding place, swam out to it, and twenty times the trapper sank beneath the drift by grasping a sunken tree that was imbedded in the sand. But, though the Blackfeet spent over an hour searching for him and poking the drift with their spears, they finally concluded that he had gone farther down the river and departed to beat the banks.

Heard by the wretched trapper, they spent nearly the whole day searching for him, but returned toward evening to the spot where the dead chief lay, and Colter could tell by their retreating voices as they wailed that they were carrying home the body. As soon as he thought they must be out of sight, Colter crawled out, so chilled by the water that he could scarcely use his limbs, and so exhausted by the loss of blood and his terrible race that he thought himself dying. But courage revived after a time, and he started for Lisa's fort on the Yellowstone.

His situation was so desperate that he dared not let his mind dwell on it, for fear that he would lose his resolution and die of despair. The fort, the nearest place where he could hope to fall in with a white man, lay a full week's journey from him, and he was not only stark naked, but without a weapon with which he could kill game and so support life. His feet were in a fearful condition, cut by the sharp rocks and the thorns of the cacti over which he had run his race. Exposed to the heat of the sun by day and the dews of night, and tortured often by hunger and thirst, the trapper still pushed on, determined to live through it all.

He subsisted for days on the wild plant known as sheep sorrel, and the few weeds and grasses peculiar to the wild stretch of country over which his way lay. One day he found the hole of a rabbit, in which was a litter of young. Having no way of cooking, and too famished to wait to do it if he had had, Colter seized the little creatures and hastily killing them with a sharp stone that served him for a knife, devoured their still palpitating bodies, tearing off their skins with his naked hands. On another occasion Colter attacked a wildcat with only his stone weapon and killed it, sucking the blood and eating it to the very entrails.

On the ninth day after he had escaped from the Blackfeet a party of two traders and a trapper named McLellan set out from Lisa's fort for the south, and when about six miles on their journey came across an object lying on the plain with several buzzards hovering over it. Taking it for the carcass of a calf or deer the travelers were about to pass it at a distance of twenty or thirty yards, when McLellan happened to see it make a gesture, as if to fight off a buzzard that had alighted near it. The movement excited the hunter's curiosity and he rode nearer the object.

"Good God!" he cried. "Boys, it is a man!" It was Colter, who, unable to take another step, had lain down to die. He was blistered from head to foot by the sun's fierce heat, and had had nothing to eat for over two days and no water for twenty-four hours. With all possible care he was taken back to the fort and there regained his health and strength. With his sufferings in mind Colter became an Indian scout, and is said to have killed with his own hand a hundred Blackfeet. He wore a belt to which dangled the scalps of that number of that tribe.—Philadelphia Times.

Bottles in the Sea.

The prince of Monaco had upward of 1,070 large bottles, incased in a thin copper covering, thrown into the sea at different points of the ocean between Europe and America, and of these 226 have been returned to him by the governments of the various countries to the shores of which they had drifted, and their progress has been noted with sufficient accuracy to lead to the conviction that the movement of the upper part of the water is circular, the center being to the west of the Azores. The tide of the Atlantic thus descends the coast of Africa, and, running in a westerly direction, flows on toward Bermuda, and then turns eastward.

The speed at which the bottles traveled is estimated at an average of four miles in twenty-four hours, though at some points they attained a rate of six miles. It was in the western half of the circle thus described that the rapidity was greatest. One bottle had drifted about for upward of five years.—Pall Mall Gazette.

Somewhat Qualified.

Little Girl—Did you ever see a ghost? Little Boy—No.
"Didn't you ever, really?"
"No."
"That's queer. Everybody has seen ghosts."
"Everybody?"
"Well, I don't mean that exactly, but nearly everybody has known people who have heard of people who have seen ghosts."
—Good News.

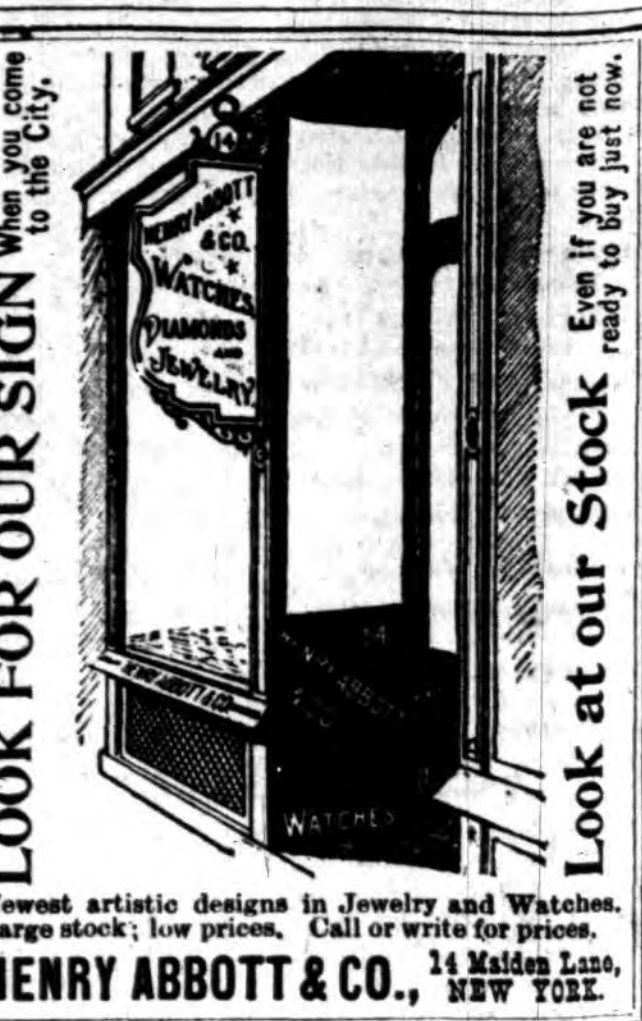
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